

Message Text

SECRET

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51

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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R 181111Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 451

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

S E C R E T COPENHAGEN 0446

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: ENRG, PFOR, DA, IN, PK, SA

SUBJECT: ALLEGED SAUDI OIL DEAL WITH INDIA

1. MRS. WALTER RICE, THE WIFE OF THE FORMER US AMBASSADOR TO AUSTRALIA, TOLD ME AT LUNCH FEBRUARY 15 THAT JAMAL H. JAWA, THE SAUDI DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF PETROLEUM, HAD TOLD HER IN BEIRUT ON FEBRUARY TWELVE THAT SHEIK YAMANI, THE SAUDI OIL MINISTER, HAD INFORMED HIM THAT HE, YAMANI, HAD RECENTLY CONCLUDED A DEAL WITH MRS. GANDHI WHEREBY SHE PROMISED TO "KEEP OUT OF TROUBLE WITH PAKISTAN" IF SAUDI ARABIA WOULD SIGN A LONG-TERM AGREEMENT TO SELL OIL TO INDIA.

2. MRS. RICE SAID THAT SHE AND HER HUSBAND WERE IN BEIRUT TO TALK TO JAWA ABOUT AN ALUMINUM SMELTER WHICH RICE, WHO IS CURRENTLY EMPLOYED PART-TIME AS A CONSULTANT FOR THE REYNOLDS MELTAS COMPANY OF RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, IS TRYING TO SELL TO THE SAUDIS. POWER FOR THE PLANT WOULD BE GENERATED BY GAS FROM THE OIL WELLS WHICH IS NOW WASTED BY FLARING.

3. IN THE COURSE OF A LONG EVENING AT BEIRUT NIGHT SPOTS, MRS. RICE AND JAWA BECAME FRIENDLY AND THE MORE HE DRANK THE MORE HE APPARENTLY CONFIDED. THE STORY ABOUT YAMANI (WHO

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MUST BE HIS BOSS) AND MRS. GANDHI WAS THE ONLY ONE, HOWEVER,

WHICH SHE FELT IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO HAVE PASSED ON TO THE DEPARTMENT. EVIDENTLY IT NEVER OCCURRED TO HER TO GO TO OUR EMBASSY IN BEIRUT AND TELL THE STORY TO AMBASSADOR GODLEY.

4. COMMENT: MY IMPRESSION WAS THAT MRS. RICE, A FORMER DANISH SAS HOSTESS, MISSES EMBASSY LIFE AND THIS TALE MAY WELL BE AN ATTEMPT TO GET BACK IN THE SWING. SHE MADE A POINT SEVERAL TIMES OF SAYING THAT SHE WANTED TO BE QUOTED. ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE JUST MIGHT BE SOME TRUTH IN WHAT JAWA TOLD HER.
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